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SUBJECT Oil Drilling in the Shugurskiy Rayon

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SOURCE

1.

Their questions were designed to test [redacted] the practical aspects of oil drilling, such as the drilling outfit, well rig, systems of drilling and soil stratification. We were told that the oil deposits in the Tatar region were discovered in 1941 and were so rich that this area was considered a second Baku.

Description of Oil Field

2. The oil fields were located in a hilly, sparsely wooded countryside. The nearest railroad station was Klyavino (5415N - 5201E) about 40 km west of the oil fields. This was a small rayon city with 1,000 houses, situated on the single track railroad line. It is connected with the single track line leading to Kazan Ryazan-Tula. The nearest large city was Uralskiy Borod, about 250 km South-East of the oilfields.

3. [redacted] I saw six derricks, some 41 and 28 m high. [redacted] These derricks were distributed about five km apart. In the same region

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were three oil tanks, each of 100 tons capacity. There were other derricks, but I could not see them because of the hills. The oil was pumped from the wells through pipes to storage tanks, and from the tanks through large pipes to some other place I do not know.

Production and Operation

4. Our best well produced about 50 tons of oil in 24 hours. We usually found oil at a depth of 1200 meters. Our drilling speed was, on the average, 90 meters in 24 hours. Drilling was fast for the first 100-200 meters through sand and clay, but when we reached 1,000 m depth, drilling was very slow, about 10 cm per eight hours. We changed drills twice in eight hours. Some of our older drillers told us that in America the speed of drilling was 83 m per eight hours.

Equipment and Organization

5. The main difficulty in our work came from our drill pipes; they were old and constantly wearing out. Drilling was done 24 hours a day in summer, and in winter in three shifts of eight hours each. A crew of five men worked on each shift: the driller, driller's assistant, the rigger, motorman and laborer. Each derrick had four tractor Diesel motors, which also generated electricity. The Diesels were of Russian Ural machine construction, 300-350 HP each. They worked 1,200 hours without repair. After that, they had to be replaced. Equipment, drill pipes, drill rods, etc, were transported by new ChTZ tractors /Chelabinskii Traktorni Zavod/ and by Zis three-ton trucks. No trucks could be used in winter time because of the dirt roads.
6. Two systems of drilling were used: the turbine system and the rotary system. The drill pipes used were six inches and eight inches in diameter. The drills were from 5.75 cm to 25.75 cm in size, the largest size being used for initial surface drilling. At 1,000 meters' depth the drills often broke but we always managed to recover them.

Wages and Workers

7. With the exception of the director of the oil fields, who was a Russian, all workers and drillers were Tatars. They liked this work because they could earn more money at the oil fields than on the kolkhozes. The oil field laborer earned 500 rubles a month, and [redacted] paid 980 rubles a month. From this sum [redacted] pay two percent for the income tax, and, in addition, [redacted] rubles per year to the government loan. We had been told that the loan subscription was voluntary, yet we were allotted certain sums according to our salaries. We all felt that we got a good salary. However, if some of the tools were damaged through the worker's negligence, he had to pay for their repair or cost.

8. [redacted]

9. The workers at the oil fields were well treated. They were given water proof boots, raincoats and caps free of charge; workers who showed efficiency were given a bonus. I did not belong to either the Komsomol or the Profsoyuz (union). Both were very loosely organized. No one was forced in any way to belong to them.

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